

# Hillandale

## News

No 217 August 1997



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# Hillandale News

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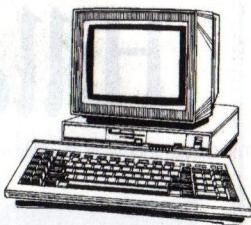
**Issue Number 217, August 1997**

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**Front cover illustration:** Toy HMV van. See Ruth Lambert's review of  
*The Collectors Guide to 'His Master's Voice' Nipper Souvenirs* on page 335.

## EDITOR'S DESK



### Corrigenda

Mike Field has asked me to point out that the *Blue Edison Gem* he is shown holding in a photograph on page 299 of the last issue is in fact was a perfectly ordinary black Model B which he had painted blue. Mike told me that the Edison catalogues show that *Gems* (and others) could be obtained with gold instead of nickelplating and with extra decoration of the paintwork. Accordingly he had plated the appropriate items and embellished the paintwork with extra gold lining and corner decoration. Thanks Mike for letting me know. *Hillendale News* does not want to misinform its readers.

The top picture on page 289 of the last issue should have had the caption "*Hutch*" - *Leslie Hutchinson*. My apologies for the mistake.

On page 298 of the last issue I had suggested the couple Miles Mallinson was talking to were Mr and Mrs Frank James. The couple were in fact Paul and Linda Austwick. Thanks to Paul Austwick for bringing my attention to this.

### August Meeting.

Allan Palmer will be giving his debut talk to us on *English Song Cycles*. It is hoped many members will come along and support Allan to encourage him and make him feel at home.

### September Meeting

Dr Peter Martland, our chairman, will give a talk entitled *The EMI Centenary - Exploding Some Myths*. Peter, in the course of his researches for his PhD and his new book *Since Records Began. EMI: The First 100 Years*, has access to one of the music world's most important archives. I'm sure that we are in for many surprises. All are welcome.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillendale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue**.

Hence the deadline for the October 1997 issue will be **15th August 1997**.

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# THE EDISON 2 AND 4 MINUTE COMBINATION ATTACHMENT

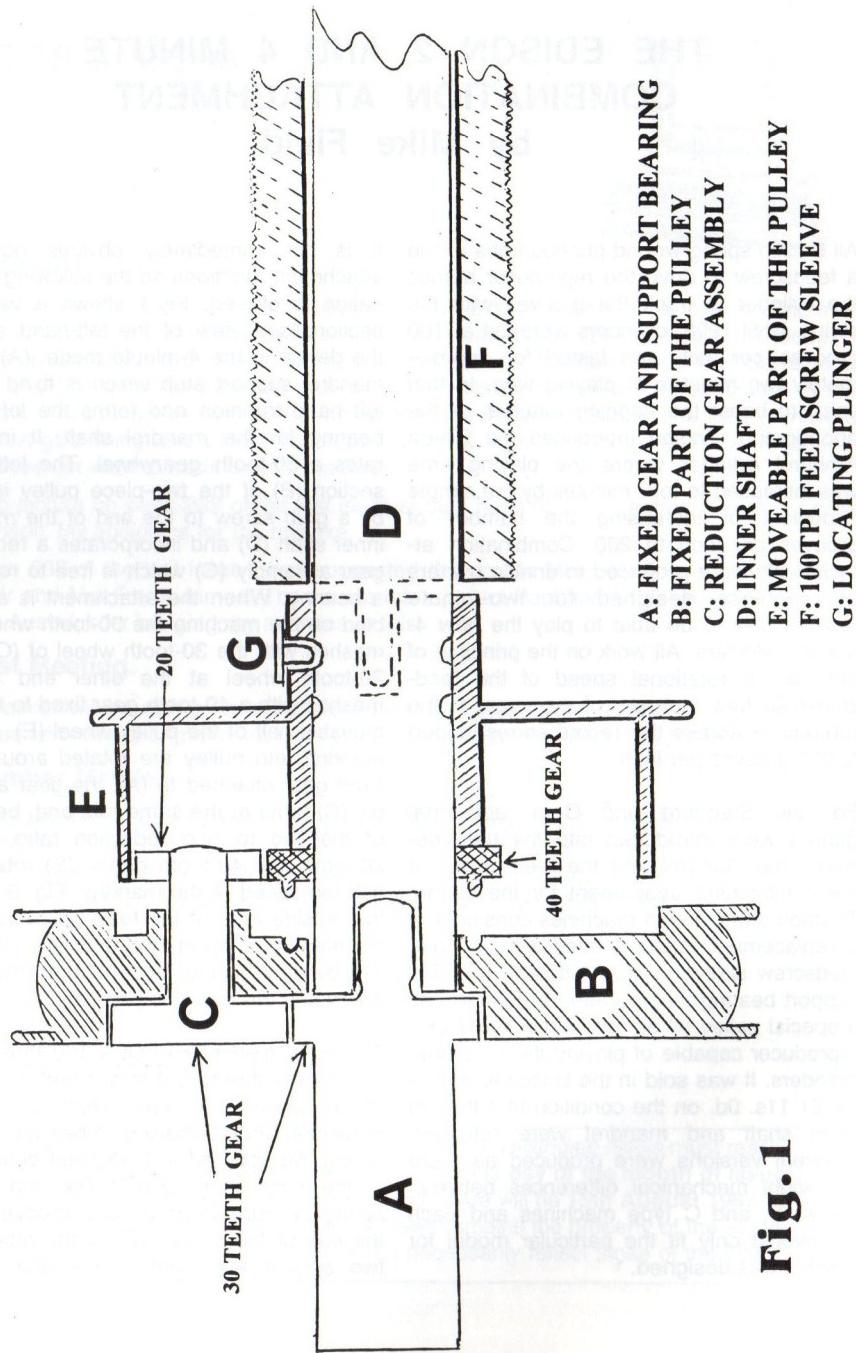
## by Mike Field

All Edison spring-wound phonographs utilise a feedscrew to drive the reproducer across the cylinder to track the grooves with the stylus. Until 1908, cylinders were cut at 100 grooves per inch and lasted for approximately two minutes of playing time. In that year, to boost the flagging fortunes of the phonograph, Edison introduced the Green Amberol cylinder where the playing time was increased to four minutes by the simple expedient of increasing the number of grooves per inch to 200. Combination attachments were produced to enable owners of machines designed for two-minute records only to be able to play the new 4-minute cylinders. All work on the principle of halving the rotational speed of the feed-screw so that the rate of progress of the reproducer across the record corresponded to 200 grooves per inch.

For the Standard and Gem, additional gear(s) were introduced into the train between the mandrel and the feed-screw but the combination attachment for the Home, Triumph and Concert machines consisted of a replacement mandrel fitted with a loose feedscrew sleeve, a new left-hand mandrel support bearing incorporating a gear wheel, a special pulley wheel and either an H or J reproducer capable of playing the 4-minute cylinders. It was sold in the United Kingdom for £1 11s. Od. on the condition that the old main shaft and mandrel were returned. Different versions were produced as there are slight mechanical differences between the A, B, and C type machines and each one would only fit the particular model for which it was designed.<sup>1</sup>

It is not immediately obvious how the attachment functions so the following explanation is offered. Fig.1 shows a vertically sectioned view of the left-hand side of the device in the 4-minute mode. (A) is the mandrel support stub which is fixed to the left hand trunnion and forms the left hand bearing for the mandrel shaft. It incorporates a 30-tooth gearwheel. The left hand section (B) of the two-piece pulley is fixed by a grub screw to the end of the mandrel inner shaft (D) and incorporates a reduction gear assembly (C) which is free to rotate in a bearing. When the attachment is assembled on the machine the 30-tooth wheel (A) meshes with the 30-tooth wheel of (C). The 20-tooth wheel at the other end of (C) meshes with a 40-tooth gear fixed to the the movable half of the pulley wheel (E). As the mandrel and pulley are rotated around the fixed gear attached to (A), the gear assembly (C) turns at the same rate and, because of the two to one reduction ratio of the 20-tooth and 40-tooth gears, (E) rotates at half the speed of the mandrel. Fig. 3 shows the outside face of the fixed pulley (B) with the mandrel support stub and gear. (A) Fig. 4 shows the inside faces of both the fixed pulley and the movable part. (E)

The outer sleeve (F) has a 100 thread per inch screw thread cut into it and is free to rotate around the inner shaft (D) but is prevented from moving sideways by a spring clip secured to a stepped boss fixed to the inner shaft. (Fig.2) The end of the spring clip runs in an annular groove cut in the end of the sleeve (F) At the other end two spigots are fixed to the end of the



**Fig. 1**

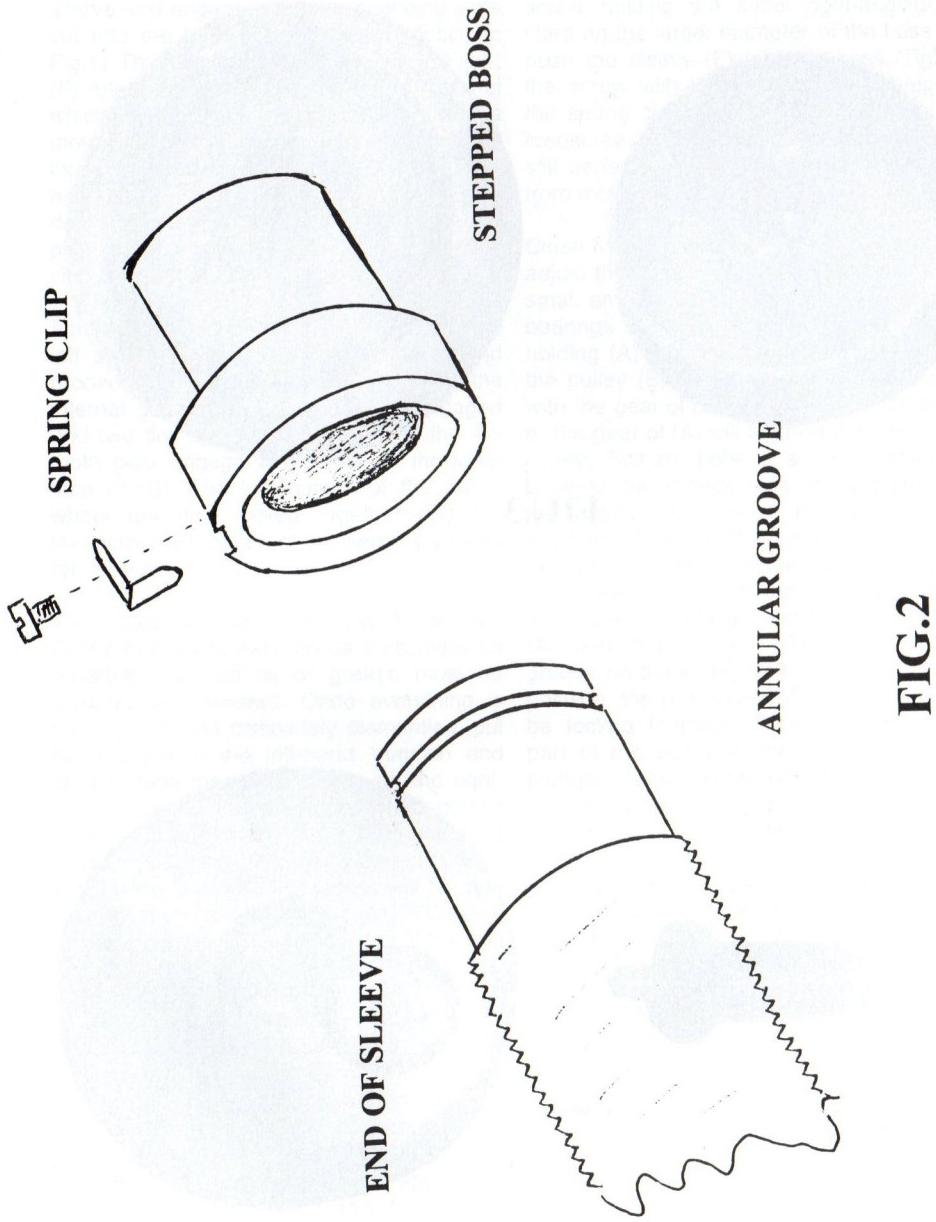
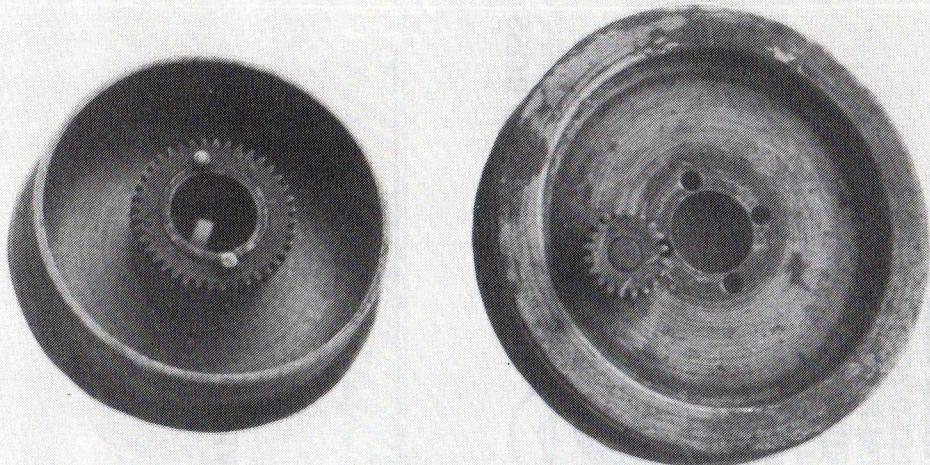
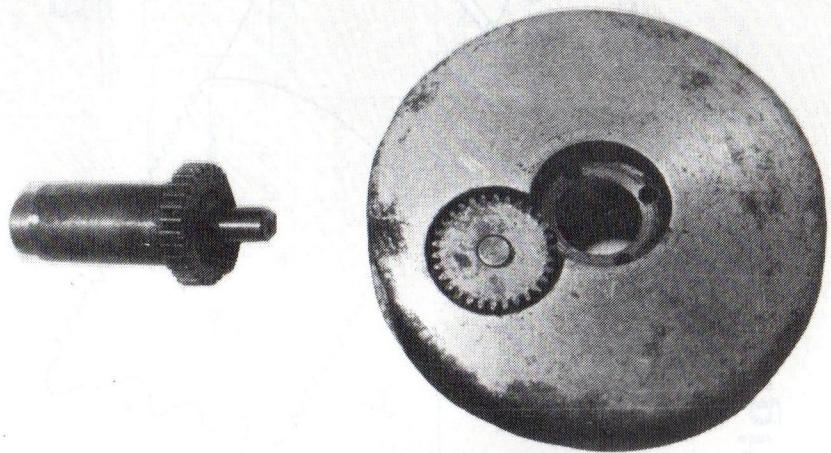


FIG.2



**FIG.3**



**FIG4**

sleeve and engage with corresponding slots cut into the boss of (E). (Shown dotted in Fig.1) Thus, in the position shown in Fig.1, (F) rotates at half the speed of the mandrel which means that the reproducer arm is moved at a rate corresponding to 200 threads per inch as required by the four-minute cylinders. The position of (E) is determined by the action of a spring-loaded plunger (G) which fits into one of two circular grooves cut in the inner shaft (D).

For two-minute operation, (E) is slid to the left until the plunger clicks into the second groove in the inner shaft. In this position the internal gears in the pulley are disengaged and two tiny spigots on the face of the 40-tooth gear engage with holes on the inner face of (B). The two halves of the pulley wheel are now locked together and the feedscrew (F) rotates at the same speed as the mandrel.

The attachment can be tricky to set up. Firstly everything must be as frictionless as possible - all old oil or grease must be scrupulously removed. Once everything is bright clean and completely dismantled, put bearing (A) in the left-hand trunnion and start to feed the mandrel through the right-hand trunnion. As the inner shaft comes through the trunnion, put on the stepped boss (Fig.2) with the larger diameter on the left. Follow this with the feedscrew (F) and then the two halves of the pulley. Continue pushing the mandrel to the left until the end of the inner shaft engages with the bearing stub of (A).

The stepped boss should now be positioned. There is a small "dimple" on the inner shaft and the grub screw on the boss must locate in it for the correct position. Remove the grub screw completely and position the boss until the dimple appears at the bottom of the grub screw hole. Re-fit and tighten the grub screw. Loosen the

screw holding the small right-angled clip fitted on the larger diameter of the boss and push the sleeve (F) into the boss. Tighten the screw with the vertical bottom edge of the spring clip located in the groove of the feedscrew sleeve. Ensure that the sleeve is still perfectly free to rotate but is prevented from moving sideways out of the boss.

Close the end gate (where appropriate) and adjust the position of (A) until there is a very small amount of end float between the two bearings of the mandrel. Tighten the screw holding (A). Now move the left-hand side of the pulley (B) until the gear on (A) meshes with the gear of assembly (C) but not too far or the gear of (A) will bind on the face of the pulley. Ensure there is a small clearance between the outside face of the pulley and the support trunnion - if not move the position of (A) slightly and re-adjust the mandrel end float. When satisfied tighten the screw in (B). Move the right-hand part of the pulley (E) tight against the inner face of (A) until the plunger (G) clicks into the groove on the inner shaft. In this (2-minute) position, the two halves of the pulley should be locked together. Pulling the moveable part of the pulley to the right so that the plunger clicks into the other groove should produce a definite gap between the two halves and if you rotate (B) the other half (E) should rotate at half the speed. Before replacing the belt, ensure that the mandrel rotates freely in both the 2-minute and 4-minute positions.

<sup>1</sup> The Edison Cylinder Phonographs  
1877 - 1929. Frow and Sefl.

# WE ALSO HAVE OUR OWN RECORDS

## Part 4

by Frank Andrews

### Besttone Records

10" double-sided records were the property of Leon Liebowich, generally at 120 Old Street, London E.C., but who, for short periods, also had other addresses in London. He never traded under his own name but as a stockist of gramophones, parts, accessories and records used various names such as **The Regent Record Co.**, The Regent Wave Co. and The Regent Fittings Co. (this last company also stocked light fittings).

The word '**Regent**' was often applied to his own disc labels, in some form or other, but with his Besttone discs the word '**Rifanco**' was always used except in those instances where a disc became a Besttone Record through the expediency of placing a sticker across a record with another name. There are known to be four types of Besttone Record using the word 'Rifanco', which are Rifanco Canary, Rifanco Eagle, Rifanco Brand/Rifanco Marble and Rifanco Lion Brand. Generally all such discs were of the stencilled type, having been pressed with their labels from other companies' masters. Sources discovered so far include Berolina Schallplatten G.m.b.H. of Berlin, the first pressers of Wm. Barraud's Invicta Records, Bel Canto Record G.m.b.H. also of Berlin, for whom John G. Murdoch & Co. Ltd. had been concessionaires, and Blum & Co. Ltd., whose matrices were at the Disc Record Co. Ltd.'s factory at Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, Middlesex. The German-pressed discs usually stated "Pressed in Prussia" or "Made in Germany". From Harrow they were "British Manufactured".

The Besttones came on the market in late 1912. Exactly why different brand names were used has not yet been determined. The Rifanco Lion Brand was the last to be introduced and, being British Manufactured, do carry some of the patriotic titles which entered the repertoires of record catalogues after the Great War had broken out and began to be issued in Sept./Oct. 1914.

The Turmalin-Fabrik Derby Record Co. of Germany, which acquired the masters of the two German companies mentioned to add to its own masters, also pressed records for Liebowich.

The last known published list of Besttone records is that of March 1916 using Blum & Co.'s masters (whose current labels were Diploma Records and Pioneer Records).

In March 1914 there had been a short catalogued 1,400 series of operatic artists with names like Antonio Pasquale and Giovanni Rico. There was a female singer in the series whose name was printed in *Sound Wave* simply as Francis.

Besttone Record stickers were also used on labels such as Diploma Record, Famous Record, Pioneer Record and even on Liebowich's own 'Playwell Record - Regent' discs. These were probably stock extant when the war began and it became prudent to cover over the "Made in Germany" and "Pressed in Prussia" printing on his German pressed stocks.

In April 1916, Liebowich, as The Regent Wave Co., advised that he was selling off all stocks of discs as the Government wartime





regulations had stopped their imported lines. Later it was reported that Liebowich had joined the British armed forces, in November 1916, and was disposing of his stock of 100,000 records which his various labels covered. He had been trading since 1903. The business picked up again after the war, but it had no more 78rpm disc records of its own, as far as I know. It did have at least one LP issued after the last war.

### The Billy Mayerl International Schools of Music

I am aware that there are those who have made a greater study of Billy Mayerl's career than I could possibly hope to account for here. My emphasis is more upon the records than of the man and his career, so I apologise in advance for any inaccuracies which may have arisen from my own investigations into the disc side of the story.

Billy Mayerl, the dance band pianist, solo pianist in the syncopated rhythm style of playing, composer and teacher, already had in 1925 his **Correspondence School of Instruction** based in Charing Cross Road, London W.C. By the time the first advertisement of his records appeared in March 1930, **Billy's International Schools of Music** was based at 29/31 Oxford Street, London W.1.

The recordings for his *Personal Demonstration Course in Modern Syncopation* were made on 10" discs at the Hayes factory of The Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd., and bore the same type of coloured labels as used on Vocalion's own 8" Broadcast discs. The discs were labelled as above and put into an L prefixed number series, with the numbers progressing with each side. I'm not sure for how long the discs were available. Vocalion had given up pressing 10" discs in the summer of 1927, except for the few last pressings under the Guardsman and Beltona contracts which ran on into the new year of 1928. It was then another 18 months

before Vocalion reverted once again to pressing 10" discs with the introduction of their Broadcast Twelve records.

A *Preliminary Course* on 10" discs from Billy Mayerl had labels more like the Broadcast Twelve labels, with blue predominating instead of red as in the 8" Broadcasts. This course was numbered with LO prefixes. I am not aware of how many different courses the Billy Mayerl International Schools of Music published.

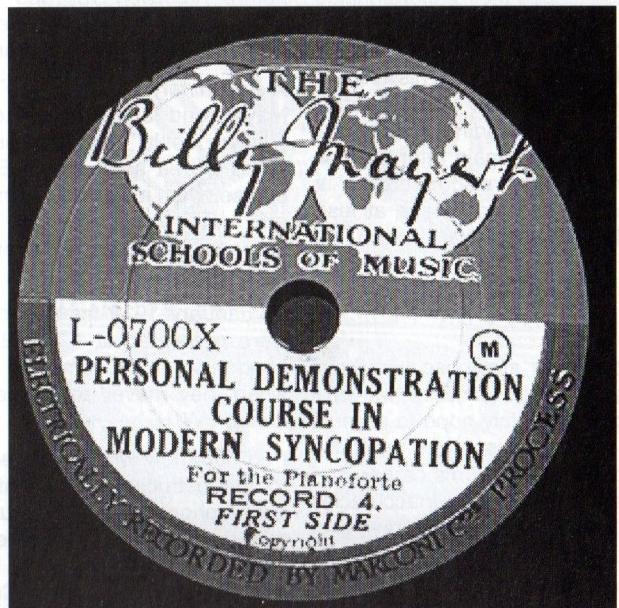
By January 1932 the London Headquarters were re-located at 1 and 2 George Street, London W.1. and remained there until 1940 when they moved to 10 New Bond Street, London W.1.

I do not know who continued to make discs for the instruction courses after the Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd.'s business was acquired by the Crystalete Gramophone Record Manufacturing Co. Ltd. in 1932. In the spring of 1937 the Crystalete record business was purchased by the Decca Record Co. Ltd. in the spring of 1937. The Time Film Company Ltd. of Manchester, which was founded in the early part of 1937 supplied Mayerl discs. This company was struck off the companies register in 1939.

It may be that the International Schools of Music went into limbo soon after the war began in 1939; in any event, Billy Mayerl formed a new company, The Billy Mayerl School Ltd. which was registered on June 24th 1940.

The International Schools of Music courses are known to have become available after the 1939-1945 war, as discs were provided by Gui de Buire Ltd., a company which carried on private contract recordings using aluminium discs sprayed with nitro-cellulose and which in 1946 was established in New Bond Street not far from Billy Mayerl's address.

1950 finds Billy Mayerl in business in the Edgware Road, Paddington W., from



where, in 1952, he began operating his own recording studios for customers' own private recordings.

I do not know of any instruction records recorded after the beginning of the Second World War.

{Billy Mayerl, instructing on Personal Demonstration Course in Modern Syncopation LO701X was played.}

### Birley's Physical Fitness Record

The correct name style for these discs is unknown as I have never encountered a description concerning them. I am also unaware of their size and cost. A report in a periodical of September 1923 stated they were on sale.

Captain Alfred Birley's Physical Culture Institute was established in "Windsor House", Victoria Street, London S.W.1. during 1923, but it was no longer there by October 1924.

### Birthday Wishes

A 6" diameter disc, this make of record is only known to me through the researchers of Jim Hayes, of Liverpool, who reports that the discs were only recorded on one side and had been allocated a MC prefixed 100 number series.

### (Bizeray Language Course Record) - Zonophone Record

The Bizeray Language Course Records were available from 1905 probably until the middle of the 1914-1918 war. All would appear to have been devoted solely teaching the French language. Monsieur Bizeray had begun his language tuition course at 40a King William Street, London E.C. in 1897, in which year he attracted 135 pupils. About October 1903 he moved his operational base to 3 Adelaide Place, E.C. and, two years later, he was claiming he had 6,442 students on his books. He advertised

his 20 double-sided language course records in October 1905. On occasions, the discs were advertised in the Zonophone Record catalogues published by The British Zonophone Company.

The discs were made by Deutsche Grammophon A. G. or the International Zonophone Company in Berlin, both companies controlled by The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. of London, and they were the first double-sided recorded discs from The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd.'s complex of companies to go on sale in Britain. As matters then stood in Europe, they were in infringement of the International Talking Machine Co. G.m.b.H.'s patents for double-sided records. However, there appears not to have been any litigation over the production and sale of the discs to Monsieur Bizeray.

The discs bore the usual label (for that time) of the International Zonophone Company as a green and gold Zonophone record but with the words, "Professor J. Bizeray's System" in small print below the lesson number.

A small booklet was published by The British Zonophone Company in 1905 eulogising the language course of Monsieur Bizeray.

The discs were numbered, progressively, as to each face, in the 81000 series set aside for speech records on Zonophone records in the French language.

Bizeray's school was still operating at Adelaide Place as late as 1915.

### Blanche Marchesi Records

Born in Paris in 1863 and dying in London in 1940, Blanche Marchesi was an artiste who began her musical career as a violinist but turned to singing and quickly became a leading soprano in operatic rôles and a touring concert singer. In later life she devoted herself to training singers.

In January 1938 she began selling some of her own recordings, probably under her own label. The discs were specially pressed for her by The Gramophone C. Ltd. She sold them from 78, Lancaster Gate, London W.2. The next month *The Gramophone* magazine reported that the discs had become generally available.

I know of discs numbered 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b, with 2b being a pressing of a 1906 recording. I don't know what the label looks like.

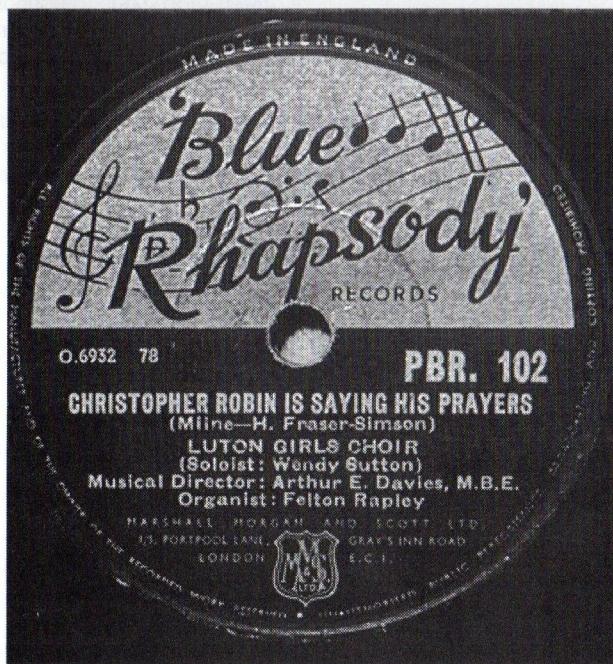
### Blue Rhapsody Records

**Marshall, Morgan & Scott Ltd.** of 1/5 Portpool Lane, Grays Inn Road, were the proprietors of **Blue Rhapsody Records**. The company was a successor company to Morgan & Scott Ltd. which had been in business in Paternoster Row, London E.C. as early as 1880.

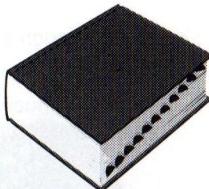
The only catalogue series I've seen was prefixed PBR (Private Blue Rhapsody?) and the matrix series was prefixed "O" (similar to the "O" seen on Oriole Records and other discs pressed by Levy's Oriole Company Ltd. at its factory at Aston Clinton, near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, where Woolworth's Embassy Records and Oriole Records were made. The Blue Rhapsody Records date from about 1957.

{Christopher Robin is Saying his Prayers, sung by the Luton Girls Choir, with Wendy Sutton as soloist, accompanied by Felton Ripley at the organ, on PBR 102 was played and brought the evening's proceedings to a close.}

To be continued



## REVIEWS



### *The Collectors' Guide to "HMV" Nipper Items, compiled by Ruth Edge and Leonard Petts*

Here it is. The book many collectors have been waiting for. It's been updated, expanded and completely rewritten for 1997. The first Nipper book was published in 1987 and contained a lot fewer illustrations and facts, but at the time was very useful.

Expanded it certainly is, this 1997 edition, weighing in at over 3 lbs. approx. 2 ins. thick, 1022 pages and 1985 illustrations. Ruth Edge tells me that 8000 copies have been printed compared to 2000 of the last one, which took a long time to sell. I don't think that will be a problem this time, even at £20 a time.

As the authors say, it is a guide but not a complete catalogue. It isn't a price guide, which is just as well as prices change so quickly. It is a check list, a reference book and an excellent guide to all things Nipper.

As a collector of HMV items it certainly showed me many items I've never seen before, and made me realise what a huge collecting area it is. This book certainly does its job well in that respect. The chapter headings and sub-headings are very clear and allow very quick searching.

Many specialist dealers and collectors have sent in details and pictures of Nipper items in their collections. So a very wide range of items is included from 1900 to 1995, and from all over the world, from Japan to America to the United Kingdom.

Items range from the very common (Mugs) to the very rare (Inkwells) to the downright bizarre (Nipper tattooed on someone's arm

in 1900). This arm will probably be the most collectable item in the book as it's obviously a "one off".

The items pictured appear in chronological order allowing easy reference between text and the visual image. This is very user-friendly as it's always clearer to have the picture close to the text, and I found that this usually worked well. It is easy to dip into to look up a specific item, by using the clear chapter headings, or to read the whole book in sequence. Some of the items I found interesting in the book are :

1. Nipper in the home - curtains, cushions, lampshades, rugs and pillows
2. Silver pencils and dealers pens
3. Window and showroom displays
4. Shop Window Pelmets

My favourite sections are the very detailed needle tins section (obviously), Nipper clocks and watches, Nipper postcards and Christmas cards, and exhibition displays. It's good to see illustration 1183 for Crane & Sons from a 1934 display and realise that I have a Crane needle tin. Equally there are some needle tins I've not got in my collection in the book which will give me something to aim for.

A lot of newer, custom-made items appear, such as those made for the Japanese market, which we don't always see over here, also items from the American producers. These are not always as collectable over here but it's good to see such a wide range of items. These details provide valuable reference for collectors wanting to collect some of the later Nipper items.

So there it is, not the definitive Nipper book, but pretty close and after all, will there ever be one? If you collect Nipper you will need and enjoy this book. If you don't collect Nipper, but are interested in gramophones and all the "go withs" this is fascinating to read and should be in everybody's library.

l'importation d'articles de luxe et de la vente de marchandises diverses. Ces articles sont vendus à un tarif très bas.

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As the ad. said in HMV's house magazine :

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And risk a prison fate  
By pinching silly things like pearls  
And gold and silver plate.

Dog burglars have a bit more sense  
And show a pretty choice  
By chancing it for something good-  
They take "His Masters Voice".

This is becoming more and more important as Nipper becomes worth more and more, and is harder and harder to find.

Quote from Ruth Edge "I don't think I want to write another one".

Ruth Edge would still like you to send in details and pictures of any new items you may find. There may not be a completely new third book, but there could be an appendix in the future. Items will always turn up. Last week I found the shaver from 1950's. It is in its original box with dog and gramophone on inside lid, with the illustrated leaflet inside. It is in the book and I've never seen one before, and of course it's in the book - in the "Nipper in the home" section.

So beg, steal, borrow or buy a copy. You won't regret it.

This book (published by the EMI Group plc, London) is available from the Society's Booklist at £20 plus postage.

**Ruth Lambert**

### ***Somewhere a voice is calling - The Golden Age of the Concert Ballad*** **by Peter Cliffe**

It is a real pleasure to find a book dealing with a hitherto neglected aspect of musical history, especially when, as in the case of *Somewhere a Voice is calling*, the author's enthusiasm is so evident. The ballad, as the term was understood in its Edwardian heyday, is as extinct a musical form as the *opera seria* or the *morceau de salon*, and though the songs may be remembered many of the lyricists and composers, though by no means all, are partially forgotten. Mr Cliffe has sensibly restricted himself to a consideration of concert ballads, excluding for the most part, songs originally belonging to the operetta or musical comedy, and the book covers the years between 1899 and 1919.

After a brief introduction in which Mr Cliffe carefully distinguishes the ballad from the popular music hall song and the art song, the songs, their writers and composers, and notable performers, are discussed chronologically in eight chapters. These are beautifully illustrated with photographs, many totally unfamiliar, and the charming coloured "song" post cards, now increasingly hard to find.

The biographical details of such composers as Mme d'Hardenot are especially welcome, as this kind of information, unless one has access to old Strand Musical Magazines or the like, is not readily available.

The book concludes with an Index of Personnel (sic) and one of songs, but though many records are mentioned, sometimes with the name of the recording company, some with the date of issue, and some with a catalogue number, there is no attempt at a discography.

It is a pity that a book upon which so much loving care has evidently spent should be in some respects disappointing. For a start,

the chronological approach, in which information about every aspect of the ballads which appeared in a given year, is lumped together, seems to me to be mistaken, especially as there is no sense of the form developing. A chapter devoted to sacred songs, patriotic songs and so forth, with a good biographical sections for lyricists, composers, and singers, would surely have been preferable.

One might argue that this book is not intended for the specialist but for the general reader, and that in any case one must be selective, but unfortunately Mr Cliffe seems to have no idea of what to select and what to exclude. To take an example. *Three Green Bonnets* by Guy d'Hardenot is mentioned as having been recorded by Gracie Fields, but no mention is made of the versions by Carrie Tubb [on Pathé] or by Melba for the Gramophone Company [arguably her finest recording]. We are told that a tulip was named for Clara Butt, where she went to school, and who conducted her funeral, but the marvellous anecdote of her Academy audition goes for nothing.

The general reader may not require or even appreciate scholarship but should not be misled by carelessness or ignorance. *Allan Water*, is not a traditional song, nor did Boughton compose an opera called the *Immortal House*. Nor should such silliness as the assertion that the poetess of *The Indian Love Lyrics* wrote some of the most original and beautiful verse ever seen, be allowed to get past the revision stage of writing. This is such an attractive and, in many ways, enjoyable book that one regrets the lack of care and organisation which stamps it, for all its real merits, as amateurish.

This book (ISBN 0 9522413 31) is available from **Evergreen**, PO Box 52, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50-1YQ price £9.95 incl postage.

**Stephen Marriott**

## **Recollections of Thomas A. Edison** by Alfred Wagner

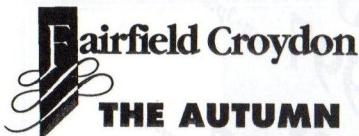
It is some time since this booklet was last in print, and members will may like to know that it is now available again.

It is a personal history of Alfred F. Wagner who entered the employ of Edison's National Phonograph Co. Ltd. In London in a junior position after service in the South African war, remaining with the Company until retirement as Managing Director at the age of 72 in 1947, and embraces the various aspects of the trade in the United Kingdom, especially the musical and office phonographs, silent and sound films and film censorship. Wagner was a founding member of the British Board of Film Censors, as it was first known.

There is a new introduction by Dr Peter Martland. This is a fascinating personal account that anyone with an interest in phonograph and film history will welcome, and it is a safe bet that they will return to it many times.

This booklet has 89 pages and a soft cover. It is published by the Society in association with Symposium Records. It is available from the **Society's Booklist**, [REDACTED] Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk NR23 1RD (Tel: [REDACTED] at £6 plus postage.

**George Frow**



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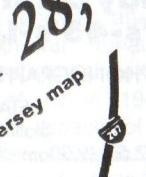
**Sound Brook, New Jersey**  
Sunday, September 28, 1997

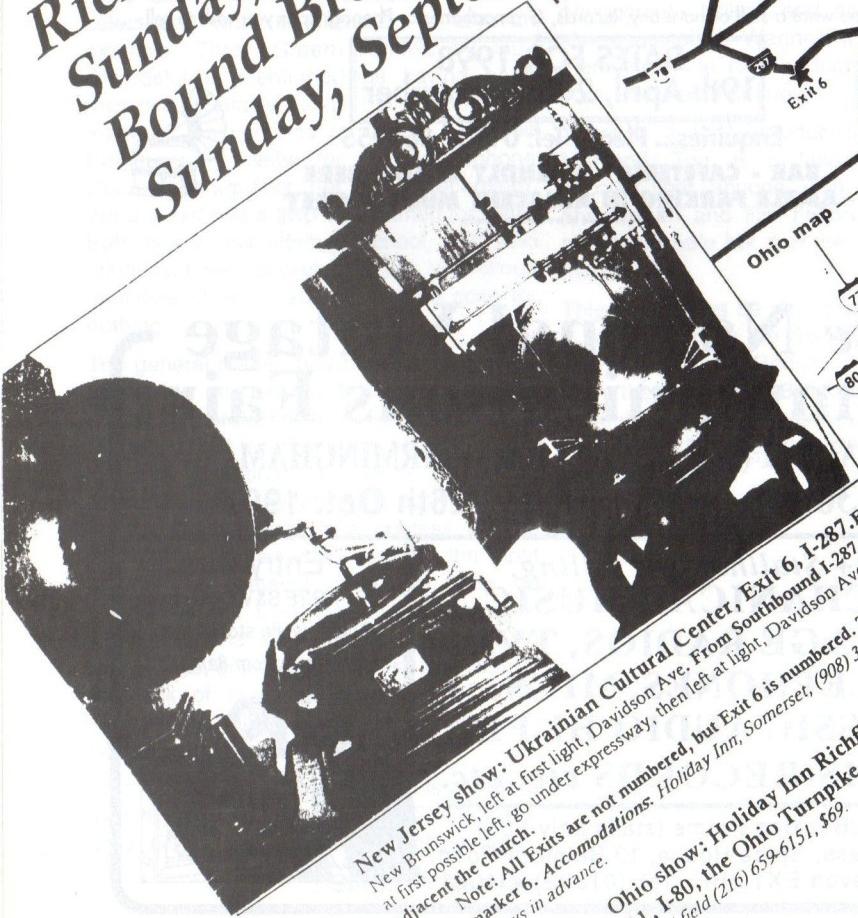
New Jersey map

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Worthington (Cleveland), Sunday, September 21, 1997  
Bound Brook, New Jersey Sunday, September 28, 1997

New Jersey map







An EMG Mk. 10 'Oversize' Gramophone, English,  
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# YOU ARE AN ACCESSORY!

## by Dave Cooper

### 4: The Needle Dispenser

This item is not branded, or at least mine isn't. I have chosen to draw the item as a good photograph proved difficult. Unfortunately, I have no details of the original price but I have tried to show in words and pictures how the device looks and works.

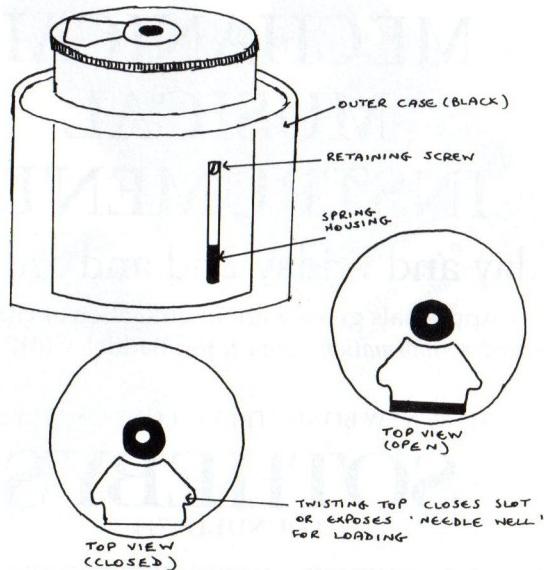
The dispenser is loaded with needles through the large opening in the top which is revealed when twisting the top. Directly below, there is a 'well' which is angled to feed the 'dispensing' bar as shown in the drawings. Another twist of the top reveals the slotted opening. Depressing the centre of the dispenser then reveals a grooved bar which with any luck holds one needle for use. A large spring returns the centre to the first position ready for the next needle which will have positioned itself in the top of the grooved bar. A half twist of the centre closes the dispenser completely.

Occasionally it is necessary to depress the centre a couple of times to make it work, but work it does and will take needles out of the well one at a time, until it is completely empty. I use the device regularly and keep it next to my gramophone. The only draw back is, it does not suit soft tone needles (and is obviously not for use with fibre needles.) Soft tone needles are too thin, the grooved bar picks up more than one needle at a time and this tend to jam the device.

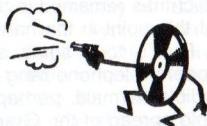
My dispenser came without box, instructions and strangely without outer black case. This led me to believe along with the absence of brand name, that it had been taken straight out of a gramophone's motor board. I have since seen a complete item in the lid of another machine in an antique shop which denies this assumption. The dealer was not keen to sell it as a separate item so I can only guess at what it may cost you. I expect you would need to part with approximately £25-30 for one in good order, more if boxed etc. Mine only cost £8 which I consider was a bargain.

Next time: The BCN Needle Sharpener

"UNBRANDED" NEEDLE DISPENSER



## REVIEW



### Eva Taylor with Clarence Williams: Edison Lateral 4

Diamond Cut continue their series of unreleased lateral Edison recordings with this Eva Taylor/Clarence Williams CD. (More will be following soon).

It is the first time we have had a blues/jazz singer in this series (what were Eva Taylor and Clarence Williams doing at Edison's, which was normally a jazz-free zone?). They had both recorded for Okeh with musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet.

She had a fine clear voice, with good rhythm, diction and phrasing. I very much liked Clarence Williams' accompaniment; rhythmic (nice broken tenths), but discreet, not flashy. Mr and Mrs Williams made a good team. He also had a small band of jazz musicians, and became musical director of Okeh Records.

The presentation of this CD is on the whole effective; the booklet has attractive photos and informative notes about the artistes. Also there is useful information about the recording processes of 1929, 1977 and 1997. But it is disappointing that some of the tracks have got transposed, though a stick-on correction label is supplied. Also, the date of 3rd Oct 1997, for a later session - should read 30<sup>th</sup> March. Full matrix number and date information is provided, but not composer credits. (And as some of the numbers were written by the performer, this is vital.)

Some of the tracks are a bit 'swishy' - but then the test-pressings were stored under extreme conditions. Generally, though, the recording quality is superb (RCA lathes with presumably Edison circuitry). The D-Cart process is a winner, too. The intimate style of singer and pianist is well captured - truly 'close-up music' (Edison's earlier slogan for electric recording).

The album starts with *Have you ever felt that way?* - one of only two numbers here that were issued (on 52646 and 14046). It's one of the best in the set.

Next is *Moaning Low*, with 5-piece band led by Clarence Williams. It includes an obtrusive washboard, which sounds like walking on gravel.

With *West End Blues* (composed by CW), we have the only other track that was issued. It is a peach of a number: a sort of cheerful blues, in a major key.

In *Oh Baby* what makes me love you so, we change to an up-tempo 'flapper' number: ET was evidently just as capable in this style. It's a very late matrix - 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1929 (only 16 days before it all stopped).

With *Come Home*, the band returns. The washboard player switched to drums, to the relief of everyone. I reckon; the band sounds much better.

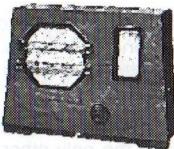
It's a surprise to move forward 48 years to recordings made at the Edison Site in 1977. This was one of several annual re-unions of original Edison recording artistes. Eva Taylor was by then aged over 80; she speaks more than sings the tunes, and understandably her pitch wobbles, but her timing is not lost. She announces the songs and reprises some of her original hits, accompanied on a piano that sounds like it had not been touched by a piano-tuner since Mr Edison died in 1931.

The last three tracks are alternative takes of numbers elsewhere on the CD. Curiously, such Edison laterals that were published often had alternative takes issued. (Normal practice with the 3 takes on the Diamond Discs, since the pressing process put a great strain on the moulds. But why do so with the laterals, which were produced in such small quantities? Raymond Wile thinks it was to speed up production, as the launch had been repeatedly delayed.)

This album is an historic collection of one of the interesting by-ways of 1920s popular music. It's kind of light blues and gentle jazz. Deep blues/hot jazz enthusiasts might do better elsewhere (just try finding the Okehs!), but for Ediphiles, it's a must have.

Paul Collenette

## REVIEW



### Groovin': the EMI Music Archives Broadcast on BBC Radio 2, 18:30 26 April 1997

Tucked away in a small corner of the Radio 2 schedules in *Radio Times* was an easily missed item of great interest to record collectors, especially those who love the old pre-CD mechanical platters! *Groovin'* was an hour-long survey of EMI's history, seen from the perspective of the archives.

After some introductory accolades from LP fans, the scene was firmly set 'on location' in Maiden Lane by your Chairman Peter Martland in the company of Alan Freeman (the DJ of 'stay bright' fame who used to introduce the Top Twenty on BBC radio). All this section was couched in the form of 'informed conversation', at first out in the narrow street, but soon in the relative quiet of Rule's Restaurant, for long a haunt of theatrical and show people and adjacent to the back entrance to the old Cockburn's Hotel building (which had served as the Gramophone Company's first recording studio).

There had been early complaints about the Gramophone Company selling only American recordings by American artists, and Gaisberg's arrival in London at the end of July 1898 signalled the launch into local popular music recorded by local artists. As examples of the early output from Maiden Lane, we were treated to one of Umbach's clarinet discs (*Spring Song*) dated 8 August 1898, and *Soldiers of the Queen* sung by Montague Borwell; these both came across very satisfyingly, and the Borwell disc was held up as an example of a 'remake' in deference to the song's popularity. We went straight on to the songs of the First World War, with John McCormack singing *It's a long way to Tipperary*, a song which had been undistinguished until the Daily Mail did a spot of 'hyping' of it as a soldiers' song.

The parallel success of classical music recordings was sealed by Caruso's early discs, and we heard *Vesti la giubba* from 1902, a record

which has remained in the catalogue ever since! (At this point in the narrative, one of the ghosts at Rule's took some sort of a cue, when a modern telephone rang - to be answered by an audible barmaid: perhaps Syria Lamonte?) The rapid spread of the Gramophone was related to the widespread dealership network, and Peter told of one dealer reporting 2000 discs sold weekly to working men during the 'Saturday afternoon trade.'

The first public event to be captured on disc was the Burial of the Unknown Soldier at Westminster Abbey (11th November 1920), recorded by a new 'electronic method.' Here, the narrative slightly obscured the fact that the Western Electric process invented in America was not the Guest and Merriman process used in 1920. We now had one of the most famous recordings, Ernest Lough singing *Oh, for the wings of a dove*, which sold 600,000 copies within six months at a time when total sales greater than 100,000 were rare.

Next we were whisked off to the EMI Music Archive to sample some record-related documents and memorabilia, starting with a recording horn. Peter, now in the apparent privacy of a soliloquy amongst the shelving, could not resist first talking down the horn - then singing (*Tipperary*)! It was interesting to note that the well-known ploy of moving back on loud notes to equalise recording levels did not prevent the wayward horn from causing distinct overload on a *modern* recording. We were told the famous story of Nipper's picture and then we were introduced to the Artist Files and letters: McCormack's 1904 contract (in purple typescript) was for 25 songs at 1 guinea each (£1.10) plus a gramophone and two dozen discs - his *Wild Irish Rose* was now played. Sydney Dixon (the sales manager in London) wrote to Victor in 1908 about Melba losing her voice so that she was "unable to speak above a whisper." Sir Harry Lauder's file (accompanied by his 1911 *Roamin' in the Gloamin'*) was found on the shelves next to Laurel and Hardy, including details of his 1925 Command Performance at Balmoral (I assume that '*Safest in the Family*' had been a transcription error!). Amongst the B's Peter found David Bowie and Blur rubbing shoulders with Adrian Boult and Daniel Barenboim, and here we were treated to the first modern recording of the programme, *Country House* from Blur's *The Great Escape* (1995).

Rushing back to the nostalgic security of 1929, we had *Singin' in the rain* with Jack Hylton's orchestra - but how secure was it? The record industry declined amidst the terrors of the Depression: by the end of the 30s sales had collapsed to 10% of the late 20s figures. The rise of radio and talking pictures also took their toll, and a spin-off disc of *The donkey serenade* from the film *The Firefly* was now played in Allan Jones' fine rendering (though not with Jeanette MacDonald, as stated). And suddenly we were about to go to war again: Gracie Fields saw us off in characteristic high-note fashion with *Wish me Luck*, and then Churchill's sonorous tones forecast *Their finest Hour*.

After the Second World War, Britain was plunged into a combination of austerity and American pop music: EMI tried to plug into the rejuvenation of the industry, by recruiting young Artists and Repertoire managers, leading to the new phenomena of Cliff Richard and then The Beatles - during the 1960s, EMI's sales rose from 80 million to 200 million. In the 1950s, the Hit Parade had arrived (as a marketing ploy, of course) and was taken up by the *New Musical Express*: we heard Al Martino's *Here in my heart*, the first disc to top the charts. However, rock'n'roll came in very slowly and A&R managers were 'hauled over the coals for introducing such miserable music' - this aspect was underlined by Elvis Presley's *Heartbreak Hotel* (which however reached number 2 in the charts).

Now we were treated to a wonderful insight into the 'business end' of record production from the men on at the pressing-plant at Hayes, who were clearly devoted to their trade and craft and described the process of moulding vinyl discs (18 seconds to 'pull' a disc) which had continuing demand, albeit in all the colours of the rainbow (even luminous pressings!). A test playing of a positive yielded part of Paul McCartney's *Martha My Dear* (from the so-called 'White Album'), and another Beatles excerpt (*I wanna hold your hand*) illustrated one workman's story of the time when nearly every one of 77 presses was producing copies of that particular record - and he had to test two discs off every press every night, so that he had trouble sleeping! The arrival of the CD from Japan did not foretell the rapid growth of the new medium; the first CD bought by one man was Pink Floyd's album *Wish you were here* and we were given *Shine on, you crazy diamond* - another Floyd album (*Dark side of the moon*) had been EMI's first CD production. With CD technology still young, the DVD (Digital Versatile Disc) was mentioned as being the

imminent next stage of development. Altogether, for a PR job, EMI could not have chosen better inside advertising for their industry! As one man said, the pressing-plant workers were very conscious of their history and were 'a little bit proud of it.'

To round off the programme, back in Rule's restaurant Peter described the record industry as one of the century's great success stories, to continue as long as there was talent around and people who wanted to hear it. And so we concluded appropriately with Tina Turner's 1989 recording of *The best*.

Production of the programme by Ian Bell was skilful: it allowed Peter to make important points clearly and at decent length, and it also generally allowed for complete discs to be played - usually with some overlap of commentary, but mostly *complete*.

It's a great pity that the *Radio Times* had declined to make a feature of this programme: maybe it will be repeated with lot more publicity now that the EMI exhibition 'music100' has opened in London. The billing should at least have referred to Peter's part in what was clearly a feature made from the historian's point of view; the programme was a fascinating view of the record industry, and pointed up the value of recordings as *documents*, both social and industrial, as well as entertainment.

Peter Adamson

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# LETTERS

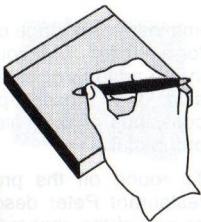
## Whither CLPGS?

Dear Chris,

I don't agree much with in Steve Miller's letter in the February 1997 issue of *Hillandale News*, but welcome its appearance for other members to give their views. Here are mine.

Steve's main point seems to be that CLPGS should promote itself more and adopt a higher profile, partly to encourage new members but also to become the public champion for 'pure' gramophones. He suggests that if the Society does not do this it will expire. I consider this view to be misconceived. The Society exists because a handful of enthusiasts are prepared to give their time, energy and talents to make it function and because there is sufficient interest in the subject to produce a few hundred members who make it worthwhile. In the 18 years that I have been a member most of those who run the Society have changed but others have emerged to take their place. I can see no reason why this should not continue; I might even offer to play a larger rôle myself one day if/when the current preoccupations of my life ease. Moreover, I doubt that there is much of an additional market to capture in terms of additional members. It is, after all, a rather specialised interest. What I fear is that a more upbeat, outgoing policy on the part of the Society would attract those with no real interest in the subject beyond a desire to make money from it and, as one has seen with some other antiques, prices would soar to silly heights and beyond the reach of most of us. In short, I think it much better for those with a genuine interest to find the Society, rather than the Society reaching out to find them.

Steve's next point is to criticise the content of the magazine. Unlike him, I do find articles on record companies, labels, matrix numbers etc. interesting. Possibly because it is still relatively easy and inexpensive to pick up 78s, and because I don't very often buy machines, this is the active part of my interest. I usually buy 78s for the content, but occasionally buy out of interest in the label. A few years ago while on holiday in the Isle of Man I acquired a Beltona record (No. 936, matrix numbers MC7558/9, Lieut. Harry Pell of the 7th Battalion Durham Light Infantry playing *The Rosary* and *In An Old*



fashioned Town on the cornet). I had not seen a Beltona record before and it appealed to me. It was in its original sleeve (Beltona Record - Curiously Euphonic) with splendid information about the Euphonic Needle Grip, the Beltona Peridulce and Petmecky Needles ("Unanimously proclaimed the KING of all steel needles"). I knew nothing of Beltona and was very interested to read Frank Andrews' piece about the company (*Hillandale News* No.215, pages 248-257). As recently as a few weeks ago in Greenwich Market here in Southeast London I picked up a brown Canadian Berliner of Caruso and, lo and behold, on page 274 of the same *Hillandale News*, in the West of England Group's account of their meeting, I learned a little of these. I do agree with Steve that musical preferences are a personal matter but am puzzled how he can possibly object to record recitals. Surely none of us should have such closed minds that we cannot possibly listen to - and enjoy - other peoples musical enthusiasms.

Lastly, why the emphasis on attracting younger members? I can see that age may influence attitudes to some of the big issues (life, death and so on) but what possible relevance can it have to an interest in gramophones? Best wishes to you and please don't change the Society.

Yours,

Bob Carlisle (age 47½), London SE

Dear Chris,

I have read Steve Miller's letter with interest and as a machine collector I share a lot of his statements. I would also be interested in more information about machines and companies who made them, but I thought that this information might have been published years ago. Maybe it would be a good idea to for the Society to publish a collection of reprints of former articles on machines and companies. This could also be offered to new members. I visited the Phonofair at Northampton in 1995 and 1997, but was disappointed that the selection of machines for sale was really poor. Most dealers I know in the U.K. just don't go there. Why is it so unattractive for them? An extra idea to increase the activity of members could be a members list describing their interests so that new members could contact the specialists.

Best regards,

Friedhelm Maur, Hanover, Germany.

{Your idea of a membership list is good; however we cannot publish one at the moment as we may fall foul of the U.K. Data Protection Act. Ed.}

**Dear Mr Hamilton,**

At the risk of joining the ranks of the morbidly curious I wonder if other members would welcome a listing of the names and addresses of the membership of the Society. Updating to cover new and sadly deceased members could appear say annually. As circulation of *Hillendale News* is presumably confined to membership I do not think such a listing would be open to abuse. Indeed in the case of several other organisations to which I belong this information is standard practice. This information could be published in either *Hillendale News* or as a separate pamphlet.

I feel sure there must be many members like myself residing in rather remote areas who are for this reason or perhaps through age and disability prevented from attending Society meetings. As you pointed out in your comments on Mr Miller's letter in issue 215 most members' sole means of communication with each other is through the pages of *Hillendale News*. Access to a list of members would allow one to discover whether other members live locally with whom could readily establish a contact. At present I am offhand aware of only one other member resident in Scotland!

Although a member for some fourteen years I remain woefully ignorant of many aspects of the Society including the size of membership and its distribution world-wide. Perhaps you could spare a line in *Hillendale News* to satisfy my curiosity in this respect.

Yours sincerely,  
William McKnight Toner, Bridge of Weir,  
Renfrewshire

{My comments to the previous letter also apply here. However you raise an important issue and we will have to discuss this in committee and see whether are ways round the problem. *Hillendale News* is circulated to quite a few places outwith the Society membership and this may cause difficulties. As to membership we have around 700 members of which 500 or so are U.K. based. Europe and the U.S.A. are the next important membership bases and the Far East takes up the rest. Incidentally there are about 25 of us based in Scotland! Ed.}

**Dear Chris,**

This letter is partly prompted by what Steve Miller wrote in the April 1997 issue of *Hillendale News*.

I have long worried about what will happen to the research files of Britain's discographical researchers. Probably most will have arranged to have these sent to the British Library's National Sound Archive, but I would take bets

that the research efforts of many collectors will end up on the Corporation tip!

However, that's only part of the problem - how accessible is the information that is already there and how accessible will future donations be? Fine if you live in London, but not so good for us provincials.

There seems a need to have an officially sponsored National Discography that could be issued on computer disks. The first place to start seems to be in the catalogue reconstructions and/or matrix listings. HMV, Parlophone, Columbia and Decca seem to have been covered reasonably well in the EMI Archive and National Sound Archive, even though they are not readily accessible. But what about that myriad of labels that flourished and died during the 78rpm era?

I would like to see funds made available to transfer the files of our leading discographers onto disk, perhaps starting with those of Frank Andrews, Arthur Badrock and Alan Kelly. It would probably be best to start with those labels that produced their own masters (Beka, Favorite, Jumbo, Odeon and Winner). A record could be indexed by catalogue number, matrix, artist, tune title or even composer. Labels that issued very little material could have several makes per disk. If these could then be sold for a modest sum I am sure that such new information would be flushed out once collectors could see what was missing.

It seems astonishing that there is no discography of English folk music, Welsh language records, Scottish folk music or Music Hall on commercial disc. So much effort has been put into American blues, jazz and dance records, operatic material and 'classical' discographies that our indigenous culture seems to have been ignored. I am researching the Scottish material and artists on the Beltona label but find that no cultural organisation in Scotland has the least interest in my research.

The nub of this letter is therefore what chance is there of a grant from the national Lottery to fund the types of effort to which I have referred? The CLPGS, being a registered charity, seems the best organisation to investigate the situation. I've no real idea as to what sort of sum of money we are talking about, but a conservative guess would be in the region of £250,000 to £500,000. Large sums of money in everyday terms, but very modest in terms of national expenditure on items of Italian statuary or Dutch paintings, let alone 'sheep pens' in Cumberland and revolving towers at hospitals.

I would be interested in what you feel about this letter and what the CLPGS committee thinks. Perhaps it could be referred to in your next editorial?

Best wishes,  
Bill Dean-Myatt, Sutton Coldfield,  
West Midlands

{The idea of a National Discography to help researchers is good one; however putting the ideas into practice will be a monumental task. The cost of the resultant computer disks are unlikely to be modest. A large amount of time and money will have been spent putting the information in place and presumably will have to be recouped from sales. I suspect that institutional/national/public libraries will be the only places where such information will be available. Few private individuals will want to purchase the disks. The discographies published by companies like the Greenwood Press in the U.S.A. are a case in point. By the time they reach Britain all one has to do to arrive at their U.K. selling price is to convert the \$ sign to the £ sign. This puts them out of the price range of the average collector. However you have raised another important matter that I believe the Society's committee should discuss. Ed}

## Help Please!

**Dear Mr Hamilton,**

I am writing to enquire as to whether I am the youngest member, so far, of the Society since its foundation in 1919. I am thirteen years old myself.

Also I would like any information you or any other member may have on the leaflets that were sent out with the Columbia sample record *The Birth of Radio Columbia RO 67.*

I have two gramophones. The first is an HMV 101 portable from 1929 and the other is an A. W. Gamage of Holborn, London cabinet model from 1924. I have been told that most of its parts were made abroad even though 'made in England' was put on them. It has a Garrard double-spring motor but this is all I know about it. I would be grateful if anyone can supply me with more information on this model.

I read an article in a book telling of the most distressing self-hanging of a director of the West London branch of Gamages but have so far been unsuccessful in finding anything about their gramophone activities.

I hope some readers can supply with the information I am after. I am enjoying my membership so far.

Thank you for your kind co-operation,

Yours sincerely,  
Colin Barnard, Eastbourne, East Sussex

{Thanks for your letter, Colin. I'm glad that we have some young people interested in our hobby. The Society does not keep records of its membership as far back as 1919 so I don't know if you are the youngest member the Society has had so far; but I'm pretty sure you are the youngest member at present. The Garrard motor on your Gamage cabinet gramophone is British made. I am sure our readers will be able to supply the other information you are after. Any one who can help may send me the information which I will pass on to Colin. Ed.}

**Dear Chris,**

Could some knowledgeable Scottish reader please tell me a little about the contralto Catherine Mentiplay? She recorded *Caller Hererin'* (Bb 3471-2) and *The Flowers o' the Forest* (Bb 3472-2) on 19 September 1923. These were issued on HMV B 1823.

It is a fairly safe bet that *A Highland Lad My Love was Born* and *The Rowan Tree* (HMV B 1824) were recorded at the same session along with *The Keel Row* and *Row Weel My Boatie*, which are duets with another singer, Marie Thomson, presumably a soprano. However I have not yet come across these records. As far as I know, Catherine Mentiplay made no other recordings.

On the subject of Scottish singers, I wish someone would contribute an informative article on the beautiful (in both senses of the word) soprano Moira Anderson, whose career as a recording artist began (I am informed) in the closing years of the shellac record. She made a number of enjoyable LPs, but none more delightful than *Moira Anderson's Scotland* (Decca SKL 4922), reissued as *North of the Border* (Readers Digest-Decca RDS 7053). It is an absolute gem.

I do think it is time some of the LP artists were featured in *Hillendale News*. I hope others will agree.

Very best wishes,  
Peter Cliffe, Hitchin, Hertfordshire  
{Again if you have any information, send it to me and I'll forward it to Peter. Ed.}

## Columbia Cinema Records

Dear Chris,

I was very interested to read Douglas Lorimer's article on the History of the Long Playing Record in the April issue. Particularly the mention of the Columbia Cinema Records. I remember buying a batch of these at an antiques market a few years ago and enclose a list of them for anyone who may be interested. One thing Douglas did not mention was they were centre start, reminding one of the old Pathé discs. I understand that they were reissues of music already produced on standard 78 rpm, although I haven't checked this.

Kind regards,

Keith Wallis@compuserve.com

### COLUMBIA SPECIAL CINEMA RECORDS 33 r.p.m. centre start

No. YBX	Pressing	Title	Artist
1			
2			
3	WAX 5658	a1) God save the King a2) Liberty Bell March	Columbia Orchestra Ditto
	WAX 5659	b1) God save the King b2) Manhattan Beach March	Ditto Ditto
4	WAX - D3	a) Melodious Melodies	Regal Cinema Orchestra
	WAX - D4	b) Melodious Melodies Pt.2	Ditto
5			
6	WAX - D7	a) The Thistle - Selection b) Raymond - Overture	Grenadier Guards Band Ditto
	WAX - D15		
7	WAX - D12	a) Black Domino - Overture	BBC Wireless Military Band
	WAX - D14	b) Plantation Melodies	Ditto
8	WAX - D9	a) Classical Selection	Quentin Maclean (Organ)
	WAX - D13	b1) Scent of the Jasmine b2) Song of the Waterfall	J.H.Squire Celeste Octet Ditto
9			
10			
11			
12	WAX - D26	a) Ancliffe Waltzes b) Sanctuary of the heart	Charles Ancliffe Orchestra Ketèlbey's Orchestra
	WAX - D28		
13	WAX - D40	a1) Prelude in C sharp minor a2) Volga Boat Song b1) Hungarian Rhapsody 2 b2) Partita in E (Bach)	Sir Henry Wood Symphony Ditto Ditto Ditto
14	WAX - D2	a) Old & new	Herman Finck Orchestra
	WAX - D14	b) Lilac Time Selection	London Theatre Orchestra
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20	WAX - D39	a1) Wedgwood Blue a2) Clock & Dresden Figure	Ketèlbey's Orchestra Ditto
	WAX - D56	b) Classical Memories	Debroy Somers Band
21			
22	WAX - D46	a) Ballet Egyptien	Orchestra Symphonique
	WAX - D48	b) La Bohème - Selection	New Queens Hall Orchestra
23	WAX - D24	a) In a Persian market	Ketèlbey's Orchestra
	WAX - D23	b) Musical Jigsaw	Regal Cinema Orchestra
24	WAX - D67	a) Gipsy Princess - Selection	Casino Orchestra
	WAX - D72	b) Harry Lauder Medley	Grenadier Guards Band

No.	Pressing	Title	Artist
YBX 25	WAX - D71	a) A Musical Switch	Plaza Theatre Orchestra
	WAX - D80	b) Memories of J. Strauss	Squire Celeste Orchestra
26			
27			
28			
29	WAX - D100	a) Mikado - Selection	Grenadier Guards Band
	WAX - D101	b) Yeomen of the Guard	Ditto
30	WAX - D104	a1) American Medley	Debroy Somers Band
		a2) Scottish Medley	Ditto
		b1) The Dwarf's Patrol	Little Salon Orchestra
		b2) Cupid's Parade	Ditto
31			
32	WAX - D69	a1) Hungarian Dance No.5	Halle Orchestra
		a2) Hungarian Dance No.6	Ditto
	WAX - D96	b) Zampa - Overture	Bournemouth Municipal Orch

{There are 51 of these records (nos YBX 1 - YBX 51) listed in the Columbia 1935 Catalogue. Can any one provide matrix numbers for the titles Keith has not listed? If you can help please send details on to me. Ed}

## Aircraft Products Ltd.

Dear Chris,

In his letter on Aircraft Products Ltd and Sound Distributors Ltd (*Hillendale News* 216, June 1997), Steve Walker mentions the 'Zoo Voices' album of little discs. I have this set and can confirm that the discs mention, embossed near the centre-hole, both Sound Distributors Ltd and the Dubrico patent number 337796 (this would be a correction to Frank's article in *Hillendale* 215 which gives '33796'). There is no mention of Aircraft Products Ltd. The matrix numbers run haphazardly from S.D.160 to S.D.165, with a sprinkling of suffix capital letters, presumably indicating different stampers - although I have both 164G and 164D which are actually cut at different levels. When I wrote to the Zoological Society of London asking for information, they kindly supplied xerox copies of advertisements for the discs from *Zoo* magazines for July and August 1936. But they did not mention the use of the discs to promote the magazine's launch in June 1936, so that is a useful extra piece of information.

best wishes,  
Peter Adamson, St Andrews, Fife

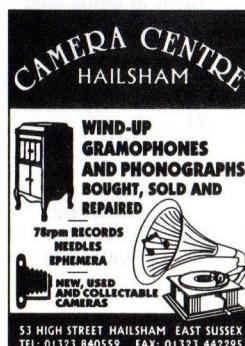
## Phonofair '97

Dear Editor,

Would you thank Ariel for the review of the 9th Phonofair in the last issue. Regarding the lack of "Concours d'Elegance". I would love to see and have one for the 10th Phonofair. But there is no way I can organise one with all the other arrangements (including many hours setting out setting out stalls, putting all the signs out etc). If anybody would like to organise it that would be excellent, thank you. Please contact me by letter or by e-mail [REDACTED]@wildnet.co.uk.

Regards,  
Ruth Lambert,

[REDACTED] Weston Favell, Northampton  
{How about one of our machine collector members helping Ruth to organise the 'Concours d'Elegance'? Ed.}



## Help Please

Dear Chris;

I am completing work on a discography of Columbia Disc Records made in the U.S. between 1901-1910, and another on Bert Williams, and wonder if I might pose a few questions to the knowledgeable readers of the *Hillendale News*? Any leads would be greatly appreciated.

1. Does anyone have a copy of Columbia-Rena 1926 or 2399, organ solos by J.J. McClellan? These were American recordings made on location at the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1910. The "Cavalleria Rusticana Excerpts" and "Toccata in F" sides were issued only in England and the master numbers have proven quite elusive.

2. Also sought is information on Columbia Single-Face 210 and Double-Face D.4, "Negro Laughing Song." This was announced in 1907 with the artist listed as Cal Stewart, but Stewart is not otherwise known to have recorded this title for Columbia. All U.S. issues are by the song's originator, George W. Johnson. Was the British issue in fact by Stewart, or was this a misprint? What is the take number?

3. During the period in which the famous black American comedian Bert Williams was touring the U.K., in 1903-1904, more than two dozen laughing and whistling songs appeared on various labels by someone else named "Bert Williams." The labels included Columbia (cylinders), Zonophone, Odeon, Lambert, Edison and Pathe, all released between 1903-1905. Has anyone heard any of these "British Bert Williams" cylinders or discs, or know anything about him? Frank Andrews has speculated that the name might be a pseudonym for Billy Whitlock, due to a similarity of titles, but Whitlock was not known for whistling songs. Can any reader shed some light on this "mystery man"?

Sincerely,

Tim Brooks, [REDACTED], Glenville Stn., Greenwich, CT 06831-0741, U.S.A. e-mail: [REDACTED]@aol.com

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS IN LONDON

The London Meetings are held in the **Parlour Room** at the **Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church Halls**, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EL at **7pm** on the **third Tuesday** of the month.

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>August 19th</b>    | Allan Palmer will talk on and play music on <i>English Song Cycles</i> .   |
| <b>September 16th</b> | Peter Martland will give a programme on the EMI Centenary entitled <i>The EMI Centenary - Exploding Some Myths</i> . |
| <b>October 21st</b>   | <i>If Music Be The Food...</i> Colin Johnson will entertain us on a subject dear to us all.                          |
| <b>November 18th</b>  | <i>What's in a Name ?</i> - Richard Nicholson will talk on artists who have recorded under pseudonyms.               |
| <b>December 16th</b>  | <i>Members' Night</i> - Traditional light-hearted seasonal programme.  |

## REPORTS



### London Meeting, May 20th 1997

In his talk entitled *About a Hundred Years - I am Dr Brahms, Johannes Brahms*, Eliot Levin of Symposium Records, first played a recording made by Thomas Edison in 1927 of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. This was made 50 years after Edison had made his original first recording of this piece. Then followed Brahms' 1st Hungarian Dance played by the composer. Eliot then let us hear Emile Berliner reciting *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*. This showed some improvement in sound quality over the previous recordings we heard.

Caruso's 1902 recording of *Celeste Aida* from Verdi's *Aida* followed by Tamagno's recording of the same composer's *Esultate* from *Otello* marked two important events in gramophone history. The Caruso recording marked the introduction of the 10" Red Label Celebrity catalogue and the Tamagno recording marked the increasing use of the system of royalty payments to artists.

*Buy Imperially* was featured in an advertisement for Imperial Records. The record could be bought from the manufacturer. The quality of this 3½ inch diameter record was quite remarkable.

Scott Joplin's *Magnetic Rag* taken from a piano roll in the Brentford Musical Museum collection gave the impression that some piano rolls could be 'adjusted' during manufacture. This made the pianist sound as though he had more than ten fingers!

The recording of the *Gas Shell Bombardment* by the Royal Garrison Artillery, prior to the British troops entering Lille on the 9th October 1918, caused a lively discussion among the audience as to the recording's authenticity.

Other items heard were an address by Mahatma Gandhi and a short talk by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on *Spiritualism*.

This was a most interesting programme and it was enjoyed by all present and our thanks go to Eliot Levin for presenting it.

**Geoff Edwards**

### London Meeting, June 17th 1997

In his programme *A Pair of Sparkling Guys* Geoff Edwards dipped into the D'Oyly Carte 78s of the '20s and '30s, and brought us into recent times with the complete LP of *Trial by Jury* conducted by Royston Nash. In between were played some of the American Gilbert and Sullivan recordings by Martyn Green.

This is a wide and debatable subject to cover in less than two hours and the history of the G & S partnership can make a series in itself, but I suggest that a comparison of the styles of performers since electric recording would have added a useful dimension this talk and should have included our enthusiastic member of long ago, George Baker. Perhaps the amplifier was at fault but the diction of Derek Oldham and Sydney Granville was much clearer than the *Trial by Jury* LP and of a quality now rare.

Seldom heard nowadays is Sullivan's overture *Macbeth*, written for Sir Henry Irving's production of December 1888. Allen Sherman's amusing parody on *Tit Willow* called *A Bronx Bird-watcher* was well worth hearing.

**A London Correspondent**

## **Midlands Group Meeting, March 15th 1997**

Two separate programmes were given, as per our now customary format. Roger Preston, our Treasurer who is well known for his leaning towards the more serious side of music, began the evening with *A Classical Man Looks at Jazz*. Roger began by explaining that what was to follow would be jazz influenced pieces he had heard and enjoyed. Roger commented on each item as it was played (from tape).

The first item was *Summertime* from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, sung by Billie Holiday and featuring solos by Bunny Berrigan (trumpet) and Artie Shaw (clarinet) recorded in July 1936. Roger's fondness for the incomparable clarinet of Benny Goodman was illustrated by no less than five pieces in which Goodman was involved. We heard items with Fred Astaire (*Just Like Taking Candy from a Baby*), Ella Fitzgerald (*Good-night My Love*), Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller and Paul Whiteman. The final choice of Roger's was The Duke Ellington Orchestra playing *Take the A Train*.

This tuneful programme was well received by the audience.

After refreshments Wal Fowler presented a tape programme called *Come Fly with Me* and all twelve of his choices had a connection with flying and aeroplanes.

Wal's first choice was the famous *There's Something in the Air* by the Squadronaires Dance Band. This was their well-known signature tune. The Squadronaires was the first big band Wal saw. This was at Dudley Hippodrome. The next item we heard was a comedy number by Al Jazzbo Collins called *The Invention of the Aeroplane*. This was followed by Douglas Bader talking about the beginning of the RAF accompanied by the sounds of early aeroplane engines. We also heard pieces, all with a flying theme, by Glenn Miller, Billy Cotton, Stanley Holloway and Tessie O'Shea. Wal concluded with the famous *Flying Home*.

A fine mixture to get the imagination working.

Many thanks to both presenters for a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

**Geoff Howl**

## **Midlands Group Meeting, May 17th 1997**

This evening's programme was a dual presentation from Phil Bennett and Ed Parker entitled *All Strung Up*, and was a musical demonstration of the use of stringed instruments in jazz.

As we now expect from our two presenters, Phil commenced with the music of the so-called classic period (up to about 1930) and Ed followed from then on to the 1960s.

Phil informed us that the use of stringed instruments was unacceptable to some jazz writers, but the 78s he went on to play for us certainly showed this was a misguided notion. The earliest use of strings in jazz (or pre jazz) was the banjo and early American exponents of this instrument included Vess Ossman and Fred Van Eps, both of whom made many solo recordings. We heard Fred Van Eps playing *Ragging the Scale*, recorded in 1916.

Following solo performances, small groups of banjos were formed including the American Savoy Quartet, which performed at the Savoy Hotel in London. We heard their version of *Where the Black-eyed Susans Grow*, recorded in 1917.

The guitar began to replace the banjo, mainly as a percussion instrument; however with the appearance of Eddie Lang, who was an excellent exponent, the guitar assumed a greater place as a solo instrument. There followed several examples of Lang's virtuosity, including a record with the coloured guitarist Lonnie Johnson. This was made in 1926 and as Eddie Lang was white we have an early instance of the breaking down of the colour barrier in music. The record was *Bull Frog Moan*.

Eddie Lang's great friend and musical partner was Joe Venuti, whose prowess as a jazz violinist equalled that of Lang on the guitar. They made dozens of recordings with many bands and groups. However we heard Joe Venuti with another violinist, Murray Kellner, in *I'm More Than Satisfied* from 1917.

Amongst the more unusual stringed instruments to be found in jazz was the 'cello. We heard a hot 'cello solo in the Bobbie Leecan's Need-More Band version of *Washboard Cut-Out* recorded in New York on 5th April 1927. Phil finished his session with the famous *Big Noise from Winetka* featuring the skilled double-bass playing of Bob Haggart.

After the tea break Ed Parker carried on the stringed theme and all his examples, except his last were played from tape.

Firstly we heard the Quintette of the Hot Club of France with their 1935 *Swanee River*, featuring the talented Django Reinhardt on guitar and Stephane Grappelly on violin. This group was one of the finest examples of the all-string unit.

Ed followed with the 1940 version of *Mr J. B. Blues* featuring a duet between Jimmy Blanton on double-bass and Duke Ellington on the piano. Blanton at times used the bow in this piece, thus 'breaking the mould' for a jazz performance on the double-bass. Ed let us hear Charlie Christian, who virtually introduced the electric guitar into jazz. He was with the Minton's House Band and played *Swing to Bop*.

A hot violinist with a less melodic but more robust style was Stuff Smith. From the last session before his death we heard *Cherokee*. Another talented guitarist who combined single string and mixed chord playing with a apparent ease was Wes Montgomery. We heard his 1963 version of *Round Midnight*.

Finally Ed let us hear a 78 from 1934 featuring Casper Reardon, a brilliant exponent of hot harp playing. We heard the Jack Teagarden Band's version of *Junk Man* in which Casper had two harp solos.

Many thanks to Phil and Ed, I'm sure many of us will listen to stringed instruments more often in the future.

### Geoff Howl

#### Northern Group Meeting, May 11th 1997

Our May meeting gave those present the opportunity to bring along their 'toe tapping delights' to *Those Dance Band Days*. It got off to a flying start with a Blue Amberol of *Aeroplane Dip Waltz* and didn't return to earth until the last record *Those Daring Young Men on a Flying Trapeze* with Henry Hall was played. Between these there was a wonderful selection of records of all the great names (and some of the lesser ones) from the Dance Band world. All enjoyed a thoroughly enjoyable light-hearted evening.

The discs were played on an EMG 10a and the cylinders on an Edison Standard, fitted with a cygnet horn and diamond B reproducer. Among the records heard were *Black Bottom*, *You've Got Me Crying Again*, *Smile Darn You*, *Smile*, *The Palais Glide*, *The Vamp*, by the Green Brothers, an Accordion band playing *In the Chapel Moonlight*, the Van Eps orchestra in *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, *When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabama* and *Any Old Iron*. Afternoon tea in the chapel completed another wonderful evening.

*Those Magnificent Talking Machines* is the topic for the September 14th meeting at 1.30pm at Alston Hall, Preston when members can discuss and demonstrate their own techniques for 'Care and Maintenance' of machines and records. However, do remember Alston Hall is a clean environment and do not bring anything which could mark or damage the surroundings.

Ann Mallinson

## Northern Group Meeting with Midlands Group, June 8th 1997

On Sunday 8th June 1997 our Group hosted the second of the joint meetings with the Midlands Group. This time the event was held at Alston Hall. We had the opportunity to return the hospitality given to us last year by the Midland Group at the first of these joint meetings, held in Wolverhampton. It was a most joyous occasion consisting of two lectures and much socialising.

Miles Mallinson was our first speaker. He spoke on *Gilbert and Sullivan on Record*. Using a wide range of formats which showed a general development and improvement of recording technology through the years Miles started with the *Curate's Song* sung by Andrew Black recorded on a 1902 G&T and played on a Gramophone No.5, recently restored by Miles. Other discs included centre-start Pathés, Diamond Discs (played on a beautiful Model B.80 Diamond Disc Player, loaned by Fred Perkes), cylinders played on an Edison Home Phonograph and laterally cut disc played on an EMG 10a. Miles final example was a stereo LP issued in 1957 of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company with Thomas Round as lead tenor in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Between these examples there were nine others from *The Sorcerer*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Mikado* and *The Gondoliers*.

Geoff Howl of the Midlands Group gave us a most interesting talk on *Music Hall Greats*. These records were all played on Miles Mallinson's EMG 10a. There were some very rare records, mostly in superb condition. Artist included such names as Billy Williams in *Let's Have a Song on the Gramophone*, Wilkie Bard, Gus Elen, Hetty King, George Lashwood, Little Tich, Marie Lloyd, Clarice Mayne, Lilly Morris, J. W. Rickaby and finishing with the two Vestas - Tilley and Victoria, the last song being the

*Gramophone Song* with Vesta Victoria, from November 1911, on Zonophone 761.

Many of the recordings from both speakers were accompanied by members of the audience, who couldn't resist joining in.

Phil Bennett thanked the speakers for their excellent talks and said he hoped the event would become an annual one.

A number of machines and records were exhibited and demonstrated by Don Watson and Richard Taylor played two cylinders recorded during one of the Midlands Group meetings last summer. These were very well received and I understand they are to go on general release.

The meeting was then closed and those present retired for afternoon tea.

**Ann Mallinson**

## REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

### Clockwork Music Group

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Tyne and Wear NE16 4ES

### Midlands Group

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Wolverhampton WV6 0JW

Tel: [REDACTED]

### Northern Group

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Barrow,  
Cumbria LA13 0HO

Tel: [REDACTED]

### West of England Group

Paul Morris,

Exeter,  
Devon EX4 4HE

Tel: [REDACTED]

# About A HUNDRED YEARS

Thomas Alva Edison      *I am Dr. Brahms, Johannes Brahms*  
**Emile Berliner recites      George Graham on Drinking**

"They are Merry" at the Hotel Royale Budapest in 1899

**"The little Widow" composed & conducted Carl Ziehrer**

Enrico Caruso      Sousa's Band      Francesco Tamagno

Sarah Bernhardt recites a scene from *Phédre* of Racine

**Prof. Dr. Josef Joachim plays Bach      Dame Nellie Melba**

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*Answer:* When it's a STOLLWERCK CHOCOLATE Record.

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Count Leo TOLSTOY - Sir Charles Santley - Scott Joplin

The Royal Garrison Artillery bombards Lille      LENIN

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*The Original Dixieland Jazz Band      Paul Robeson*

Ernest Lough      Jascha Heifetz      Ignacy Jan Paderewski

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